

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SS-15 NSC-05 DHA-02 A-01 L-03

CPR-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /048 W

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P 231420Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6009

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, CASC (PROUTY, GORDON K.)

SUBJECT: SIEZURE OF OFFICIAL PASSPORT OF USAID OFFICER

REF: LAGOS 7865

1. OFFICIAL PASSPORT OF FOOD FOR PEACE OFFICER GORDON PROUTY WAS SEIZED AT IMMIGRATION/CUSTOMS DESK, MURTAZA MUHAMMED AIRPORT, JULY 10, AS PROUTY WAS ABOUT TO BOARD AIR TOGO FLIGHT FOR OME.

2. EMBASSY OFFICER CALLED AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS MORNING OF JULY 12, TO ASK FOR RETURN OF PASSPORT, PRESENTING RECEIPT WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN TO PROUTY AT AIRPORT. POLICE REFUSED TO DISCUSS MATTER OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT AS PROUTY WAS "NOT A DIPLOMAT", HE WOULD HAVE TO OBEY THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE RECEIPT AND PERSONALLY APPEAR "FOR INTERVIEW". EMBASSY THEN HAND DELIVERED NOTE TO MEA ASKING MINISTRY TO INTERCEDE AND OBTAIN RETURN OF PASSPORT.

3. DESPITE DAILY INQUIRIES AT MEA, AND PHONE CALLS FROM MEAN TO POLICE, PASSPORT STILL HAS NOT BEEN RETURNED. PROUTY CANNOT TRAVEL TO PERFORM REGIONAL DUTIES AND HAS BEEN LIVING WITH CONSULAR OFFICER TO WARD OFF POSSIBILITY OF SURPRISE VISIT BY POLICE AT HIS RESIDENCE AND REPEAT OF EARLIER COMPLICATIONS.

4. EMBASSY HAS TAKEN POSITION THAT THERE PROBABLY HAS BEEN A BUREAUCRATIC MIX-UP AND HAS SOUGHT TO RESOLVE WITH PATIENCE AND

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GENTLE PERSUASION. HOWEVER, THIS TACTIC HAS NOT BEEN FRUITFUL AND

A FRESH STIMULUS SEEMS TO BE NEEDED. THEREFORE, WE SUGGEST THAT
AMBASSADOR SANU BE CALLED IN AND TOLD OF SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE
VIEW THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT. MATTER HAS NOW
DRAGGED ON SINCE JULY 3, WHEN PROUTY FIRST DETAINED IN POLICE CELL.
WE HAD HOPED MATTER ENDED WITH RETURN OF PASSPORT ON JULY 8, BUT
THAT OBVIOUSLY NOT THE CASE. EMBASSY DOES NOT WISH TO ESCALATE
TONE OF THIS AFFAIR BUT SOMETHING MUST BE DONE. WOULD APPRECIATE
KNOWING DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS.

CROSBY

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Message Attributes

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